



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

————— *Lee Holloway* —————
Chairman of the Board

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For Immediate Release
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CHAIRMAN HOLLOWAY STATEMENT ON ECONOMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Board Chairman Lee Holloway issued the following statement in response to the State of Wisconsin's decision to take over economic support programs currently provided by Milwaukee County.

"Milwaukee County's foundation is built upon providing economic support services. We cannot take that local option away from County residents. The knee-jerk reaction by some, including the County Executive, is to dismantle County government programs. Our constituents deserve better; they deserve the right of local representation. They depend on Milwaukee County to be the provider of last resort. It's time for the County Executive to listen to the County Board's call to re-energize our commitment to managing public assistance programs. We need to prove to the Legislature that Milwaukee County can effectively provide these resources to the community. I understand how crucial it is that the people of Milwaukee County receive the benefits for which they are eligible during this economic downturn.

"At the same time, this problem must be approached with temperance, as the decisions made on behalf of constituents should not be driven by the political ambitions of a temporary County Executive. The plan presented by the State does not demonstrate or guarantee that citizens in need would be better served. The State's takeover of the Milwaukee County Child Welfare program does not inspire confidence. Clearly, the State is singling out management as the problem. Locally, the County Executive and the County Board could consider instituting a different management model if the State requests it.

"We at the County Board have done what we can with the inadequate financial resources provided by the State of Wisconsin. As Chairman of the Board, I've asked the State to bring more Income Maintenance resources into Milwaukee County to help us better serve our disproportionately

affected constituencies. In the absence of the State delivering these needed dollars, the County Board has used all the tools available to us to meet the needs of our residents. Milwaukee County's overmatch contribution of \$3 million in property tax levy to the State's 2009 income maintenance contract demonstrates our financial and compassionate support to those whom this program serves. The State must not grab these local property tax dollars for its operation of these programs. In December, I directed the Milwaukee County Department of Audit to initiate a review of Milwaukee County's administration of the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Program. Preliminary audit work has started this month. We, at the County Board, have done what we can with the tools provided to us."

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